

# **Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot** ***Southern Ohio Port Authority, OH***

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

**EPA's** Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

## **BACKGROUND**

EPA has selected the Southern Ohio Port Authority for a Brownfields Pilot. This small Appalachian community once had a thriving industrial base, anchored by the 140-acre Empire Detroit Steel Mill in New Boston, which once employed as many as 4,200 people. Other economic setbacks included the loss of 1,000 rail yard jobs, 4,000 shoe manufacturing jobs, and the closure of the Harbison Walker brickyards in east Portsmouth. The Pilot area covers the Federally designated Greater Portsmouth Enterprise Community (EC). Poverty rates within the EC range from 29% to 51%, while the unemployment rates are among the highest in Ohio.

The main focus of the Pilot will be the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the Empire Detroit Steel Mill property. This site contains significant amounts of asbestos, lead, and other heavy metals; in addition, 32,500 tons of PCBs were removed from the site. The return of this property to productive use was identified by community residents as the number one priority during the EC planning process.

## **PILOT SNAPSHOT**



*Southern Ohio Port  
Authority, Ohio*

**Date of Announcement:**  
July 1998

**Amount:** \$200,000

**Profile:** The Pilot targets the 140-acre former Detroit Steel Mill site for return to productive use; the mill, located within a Federally designated Enterprise Community, once employed 4,200 people.

## **Contacts:**

Southern Ohio Port  
Authority  
(740) 353-5869

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 5  
(312) 353-3161

Visit the EPA Region 5 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/R5Brownfields/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

## **OBJECTIVES**

The Port Authority's objective is to bring the former Empire Detroit Steel Mill back to productive use, thereby creating employment opportunities (including 200 manufacturing-related jobs), generating tax revenue, and removing the health and safety risks associated with environmental contamination. Pilot funds will be used to assist this effort through site assessments and community outreach activities.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Assessing three parcels on the Empire Detroit Steel Mill site;
- Identifying, assessing, and characterizing other potential sites in the EC for redevelopment; and
- Expanding the Brownfields Task Force and environmental justice working group to ensure that Pilot objectives and future brownfields problems are addressed and achieved.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.